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The *lopa, tane,* and *wawine* carried out much of the economic and social activity of the community. The *mulivaka* generally directed group activities by virtue of their experience. Their advice was also listened to with respect in informal village meetings, and they took the lead in organized village work. The *tupele,* the most important group in the political organization and control of the island as a whole, formed a sort of island council, which, with the chief, governed the island both politically and economically. Each old man lived with his wife and family in his own village but was relieved from the necessity of providing himself with food; the *tupele* were supported by the community, by gifts of talo from the women and by fish caught by the men's *tangaga* fishing group.

All gatherings and meetings of the old men were held at the *awanga* (*malae*) *no te tupele,* a meeting place formerly situated in Loto village, to the east of the church and to the right of the present road, a site now occupied by houses. The old men might gather at their meeting place each day or several times a week, depending on the business to be transacted and the amount of food to be divided. The number of old men varied from year to year, ranging from 10 to 30. The lowest number on record is six.

There was no special time for the accession to the group of new *tupele.* When a man was sufficiently old and grey, he formally joined the group; his accession might be marked by a small food division among the *tupele* themselves.

It is related that long before the time of Tuiva (nine generations ago), the number of old men was increased to include younger men. The younger people were idle and turned their idleness to mischief in working off personal spites and jealousies against still younger adults (*lopa* and *tane*) by withholding food divisions and then resorting to violence when the young men objected. (See p. 301.) Tuiva initiated reforms providing that no man might become a *tupele* until he was so old as to be unfit for active work. *Tupele* were therefore so feeble physically that their children had often to carry them to the meetings of the group.

The oldest man of the *tupele* group functioned as their leader. He became the right-hand man of the high chief (*alihi wolo*) by virtue of his experience and age and was then called the *wolo.* The *wolo* was both the spokesman of the chief and the mouthpiece of the people. In addition, he had special priestly powers, and communicated with the major gods of the island on the religious structure of the lineage of the chief. This power was vested in him irrespective of his own lineage membership.

Chieftainship

Status and rank grades in Pukapukan society were not highly developed. The superior chief of the island was *te alihi wolo o Te Ulu-o-te-motu* (the major chief of Head-of-the-stone, Pukapuka). The subordinate chiefs were

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te mwi aliki (the many chiefs). The remainder of the community were without rank and were simply called *te kau* or *te tama* (the people or the children). The chief's executive (*mola*) was next in rank to the supreme chief, but his position was not hereditary. Informants stated that each of the several subordinate chiefs had an executive (*mola*) to advise him. These sub-executives were the oldest man (*tupela*) of the several villages and chiefly lineages and shared priestly functions with the minor chiefs whom they served. It is possible, however, that informants were unconsciously magnifying the former status of minor chiefs in order to glorify their own lineages; or else they were generalizing about the status of these chiefs in terms of a particular historical set-up when a minor chief may have assumed some of the powers which properly belonged solely to the supreme chief of the island.

Another ranking official sometimes spoken of was the *yula*, a name which appears only in connection with Tuiva, who acted as a sort of regent or supreme head of the island during an interregnum in the line of the high chief. It is possible, however, that the *yula* was formerly a high-ranking peace officer, deputy to the chief, without priestly functions. Informants are unclear as to his position at times other than during the regency of Tuiva.

The chiefly set-up in former times varied from that of today. Formerly, probably up to the time of white contact, the chiefs of the island were:

Village	Paternal Lineage	Chiefs
Wale	Mailiwata	One aliki (chief), one langatila (sub-chief)
	Matanga	One aliki, one langatila
Loto	I Tai	One aliki wolo (supreme chief), one langatila
	Tangalipala	One langatila
Yolo	Yalongo	One aliki, one langatila
	Yamanga	One langatila
	Yayi	One langatila

This gives a total of one supreme chief, three other chiefs, and seven sub-chiefs. The number of sub-chiefs (*langatila*) may at times have been larger, because a powerful paternal sub-lineage could well have claimed the right to nominate its own minor chiefs. No record survives to enable this question to be settled. With white contact and the control of the island by a resident agent and nominated council, changes have been made in the number and names of the chiefs. The Cook Islands term *mataiapo* has been introduced as a name for the minor chief. The present set-up includes one supreme chief (*aliki mola*), seven other chiefs (*mataiapo*), and four sub-chiefs (*langatila*):

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no canoes might be beached, nor commoners trespass. The family of the chief bathed at the next break west of the chief's channel. When the chief had finished his bath, he was carried from the water on the upstretched hands of his family retainers to Te Ulu-takapau where he rested under the shade of coconut leaf mats supported by poles. No commoner would intrude on this place. Close by it were made the special divisions (*laukava*) of chiefly feasts. The minor chiefs had similar beaches and reserved places close to their houses in their respective villages. When the chief walked abroad for exercise, the people moved away to allow him sole and undisputed right to the road.

Besides his family, those most in contact with the chief were his subordinate chiefs, his executive (*wola*), and his attendant (*toa*). This last functionary appears to have been a combination of personal servant, bodyguard, and general executive for the chief. He belonged to the lineage of the chief. He was referred to as *te talatala no te aliki* (the talker of the chief) and generally acted as the chief's agent in calling meetings, carrying messages, arranging food divisions, and like matters.

There was no chiefly language in Pukapuka, no word used only by those of chiefly rank, or by commoners in addressing the chief. Only a special salutation was used for the chief and for his children, who were greeted: "E vale e . . ." without using the chief's name. By transfer, when one commoner wished to use an extremely polite greeting to another, he used *te vale*, as "Na yau ko koe, te vale, nei" (You have come, o *vale*). Such a polite form of greeting is termed *makakauvale*.

Besides these various tapus, all the major chiefs were priests by virtue of rank. This prerogative was shared also by the executives (*wola*) of these chiefs. In those lineages where there was no chief, only the priest might go to the sacred enclosure of the lineage and consult the gods. In the chiefly lineages—Tua, Matanga, Muliwutu, and Yalongo—priests, chiefs, and executives could all go on the sacred enclosure without violating its sanctity. The division of functions was such that the priest consulted the gods on intra-lineage matters, the chiefs and the executives on matters affecting the island as a whole or the relation of the lineage to other lineages.

SACRED MAID

A final symbol of the status of the chief and of the chiefly lineage was the pattern of appointing a *moyakitanga* (sacred maid). (Cf. *mehekitanga*, the Tongan kinship term applied to father's sister.) Either the first-born female child of the chief or another girl of the chief's lineage was chosen for this purely honorific office. Generally she was supposed to be the most beautiful girl of the lineage. Chosen at the age of about ten years,

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made a right choice. Apparently no chief was ever deposed; hence the reigns of the chiefs of all the lineages must have been, in general, equally prosperous. In accounts of traditional history it is usual to find the chief displaying supernormal powers, bestowed by the god of his lineage.

In former times, as today, great rivalry was felt between the various lineages of the island, especially between those lineages headed by chiefs. Up to the time of the great seismic wave, no chief was superior to the rest. There was, rather, a shifting balance of power between the four chiefly lineages, temporary superiority going to that lineage which through the intrigue, personality, and strength of its chief, combined with numerical strength of its members, managed to gain predominance for the time. The chief of such a lineage would then claim to be the supreme chief of the island. His claim might be disputed, but as long as he was manifestly superior to the other chiefs nothing would be done about his pretensions. It was only after the seismic wave, with its catastrophic effects, that i Tua seems gradually to have assumed a dominance over the other three chiefly lineages. In the inter-lineage adoption that occurred after the seismic wave, a child from the strong lineage of Muliwutu was adopted into i Tua, to insure the continuation of this chiefly line; this seems to have lined up Muliwutu behind i Tua. With this support, i Tua became dominant and constituted itself the lineage of the supreme chief of the island, a status which it has retained to this day. As a lineage of the supreme chief was politically dominant, so were its gods preeminent over the other lineage gods. Matalilki and Tuna, the major gods of i Tua, may thus be considered the major gods of the island; they were most often called upon by the supreme chief to provide favors for the island as a whole. Nevertheless, the other chiefly lineages, particularly those of Ngake, have never completely acquiesced in either the political or religious dominance of i Tua.

Political Control

The functions of the three governing groups on the island may be summarized as follows:

Village meetings (*nukapuna kafa*), attended by the chiefs, sub-chiefs, and all adult males of the village, discussed matters affecting the village and the reserves, and settled inter-village disputes. Meetings of the old men's group (*nukaponanga no te tupele*) discussed island affairs. Meetings of the chiefs (*nukaponanga a te ariki aliki*) discussed island and inter-lineage matters. The division of functions between these governing bodies is not clearly remembered today when the government of the island has been so completely transformed by the resident agent and his nominated Island Council. Informants believed that the supreme chief called the minor chiefs together at unspecified times to discuss matters referred to him by the council of old men (*tupele*). All decisions of the old men were presented to the high chief or the council of chiefs for final approval. Whether or not this approval was nominal depended on the prestige and power of the high chief. Notwithstanding, the final vote seems to have rested with

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the chief's executive (*wola*), who had the power to say whether a law should or should not apply to the island (p. 387). Decisions were reported (*kave te vananga*) to the several villages in a meeting assembled by a special messenger, called simply *te leo o te aliki* or *te leo o te tupele* (the voice of the chiefs or of the old men). The high chief did not attend the meetings of the old men but sent his representative (*te talatala no te aliki*), who was commissioned to report the chief's opinions to the old men. It is probable that special meetings of all the people of the island were held on occasion to discuss such a matter as the redivision of reserve land, or the realignment of reserve boundaries. A meeting of this type seems to have been in progress at the outbreak of the civil war (p. 389).

The control of village affairs was largely in the hands of the village men. The chief of each village acted as priest in village functions. In theory he devoted his time to the welfare of his people and the control of village works initiated by a decision of the people. The sub-chiefs (*langatila*) were the executive officers, directing village works. Neither chief nor sub-chief received tribute from village or lineage members. Each was fed by his own family group. In island affairs, the chiefs and sub-chiefs were advisory and executive officers, but the real balance of power, in theory at any rate, seems to have been with the old men, who ordered and directed inter-village and island affairs. When the high chief or his executive, who perhaps corresponded to the modern king's prime minister, was an outstanding personality, he might assume for himself many of the powers that ordinarily lay with the old men; these powers would revert to the old men on the chief's death. The governing of the island, therefore, really lay with the group of old men who because of their age and presumed experience were considered better able to order affairs than a chief or his executive.

Sanctions

Sanctions invoked to deal with most antisocial conduct were not secular, but depended on punishment, usually sickness, sent to the wrongdoer by the gods. Lying was condemned but not punished secularly. Adultery was punished both by the gods and by the wronged person (p. 329).

Thieving from the reserves was punished by the gods. In the reign of the chief Tuliayanga, however, when there was a great food shortage, punishment for stealing was reenforced by group action; the law of *pule pae* (death law) was put into operation and implemented by the guards of the reserves (p. 387). Willful homicide seems also to have been punished by group action, perhaps if it was thought that the gods would be too long in acting. The appropriate punishment was whipping to death. The maternal sub-lineage of the victim was either made the instrument of this punishment or assumed collective responsibility for the crime, though should the homicide shock the community by its barbarity, all the populace might join in the beating (1).

If one individual should steal from another, the victim was allowed to be his own detective and judge and would proceed to reenforce the punishment of the gods. The injured person or a friend made inquiries and threatened to kill the thief should he be discovered. The thief might pose as a friend and go to look for the missing articles, simulating intense search, but always return with empty hands. The owner of the stolen property might